

STATE OF ALABAMA)
)
MACON COUNTY)

AFFIDAVIT

My name is Theodore Samuel. I have served as principal and administrator of South Macon School, my alma mater, for 23 years. I am the only principal in the Macon County School District who has served the number of years I have at one school. We have a very successful program at South Macon, despite the fact that they did not deliver on their verbal promise to make South Macon a state-of-the-art elementary school made in 1991. During the entire time that the State Board of Education has monitored the schools in Macon County, our children at South Macon have outscored the other students in the county to the extent that our school has always received the grade of being academically clear.

I am most concerned about the manner in which the decision to close our school occurred. Back in the late winter of this year, I had a conversation with the Superintendent about the plans for South Macon. He told me that no one should make statements that the school is closing. I, in turn, informed the parents and students. We made plans for the rest of the school year and for next year. Then, in April 2005, during a principal's meeting, the Superintendent informed us he was recommending that the Board closes South Macon School. I questioned this decision because South Macon students, parents and community had no input in the decision to close the school, especially since the Superintendent had told me that no one should make statements about the school closing and since it was so late in the school year.

We had no input (not even asked to give input) on the plans for the new school, George Washington Carver Elementary, no input in the naming of the new school or any of the decisions regarding the new school, such as the selection of the school colors, uniforms, etc. I feel that the Board and Superintendent have let our community down and have not afforded us the respect and cooperation that they have other schools involved in the proposed consolidation. Just because South Macon is a rural school is no reason for the children and the community to receive any less commitment and support from our school system.

Secondly, I am most concerned about the displacement of our children. The South Macon children will be divided into four different schools, and many of our younger students are being forced to travel over 25 miles to and from school on buses each day. Some of our parents are considering removing their children from the school system altogether rather than have them bussed into Tuskegee to school.

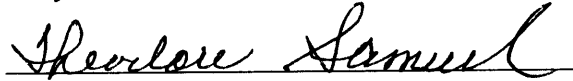
The Superintendent has reassigned me to Notasulga High School where the needs there are tremendous. Much of what I have learned about the needs of Notasulga was just presented to me within the past few days. All of my South Macon teachers have been reassigned at other schools. My secretary at South Macon, Mrs. Tracye Jackson, was not assigned to assist me at Notasulga High; matter of fact, she has not been reassigned anywhere.



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This "last minute" decision to close South Macon has caused tremendous instability, uncertainty and serious problems for the families in our community with little time to prepare.

Finally, I am proud of the fact that we have competed with some of the best in the state, and with very little help from our Board. I hope that South Macon can remain open to allow us the opportunity to continue to produce top quality students.



Theodore Samuel
Principal
South Macon School

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SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME this 8th day of July,
2005.


Notary Public

My Commission expires: 12/03/08

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